

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 01121 261603Z

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ACTION OC-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CCO-00 /018 W

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O 261452Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9083

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ACOM, UR, US

SUBJECT: US/USSR DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS LINK (DCL) TALKS

REF: MOSCOW 0872 AND PREVIOUS

1. MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS, CHIEF OF PROTOCOL, SMIRNOV, TELEPHONED EMBOFF JANUARY 26 TO INFORM THAT SOVIET SIDE WOULD LIKE TO POSTPONE DCL TALKS UNTIL AFTER MARCH 8. SMIRNOV SAID A FORMAL LETTER OUTLINING THE SOVIET POSITION WOULD BE SENT SHORTLY TO EMBASSY. AT FIRST, REASON INDICATED WAS THAT THE L'VOV TRIP COULD NOT BE ARRANGED DURING FEBRUARY 2-6 FOR REASONS WHICH WERE "NOW WELL-KNOWN." (COMMENT: PRAVDA ON JANUARY 4 ANNOUNCED THAT MILITARY MANEUVERS WOULD BE HELD FROM JANUARY 25-FEBRUARY 6 IN THE L'VOV REGION. END COMMENT) EMBOFF INQUIRED WHETHER VISIT COULD GO ON IF L'VOV TRIP WERE CANCELLED. SMIRNOV THEN SAID A MORE IMPORTANT REASON FOR THE POSTPONEMENT WAS THAT SEVERAL PEOPLE WHO WOULD BE SOVIET DELEGATION MEMBERS ARE NOW UNABLE TO BE PRESENT AT THE MEETINGS.

2. TEXT OF LETTER ADDRESSED TO ECON/COMM COUNSELOR AND SIGNED BY DR. SAVITSKIY WAS DELIVERED BY SMIRNOV LATER IN DAY. EMBASSY'S INFORMATION TRANSLATION FOLLOWS:
BEGIN QUOTE: THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS ADVISES THAT THE SPECIALISTS WHO MUST TAKE PART IN THE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE USA DELEGATION ON THE QUESTIONS OF THE ORGANIZATION AND USE OF THE DIRECT COMMUNICATIONS LINK WILL BE OCCUPIED DURING THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY WITH THE
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 01121 261603Z

FULFILLMENT OF PRESSING TASKS AND, UNFORTUNATELY CAN-

NOT TAKE PART IN THE DISCUSSIONS.

IN CONNECTION WITH THIS, WE PRESENT OUR APOLOGIES AND PROPOSE TO TRANSFER THE BEGINNING OF THE DISCUSSIONS TO ANY DATE ACCEPTABLE TO THE AMERICAN SIDE AFTER MARCH 8 OF THIS YEAR.

I ASK THAT YOU INFORM MR. NAEHER AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN DELEGATION OF THIS. END QUOTE.

3. COMMENT - EMBOFF HAD THE STRONG IMPRESSION FROM TALKING TO SMIRNOV THAT PREPARATIONS FOR THE PARTY CONGRESS MAY HAVE BEEN A KEY FACTOR IN THE SOVIET POST-PONEMENT REQUEST. THE DECISION WAS PROBABLY VERY RECENT AS EMBOFF HAD SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN RELATIONS DEPARTMENT CHIEF NOVIKOV LAST WEEK AND HE GAVE NO INDICATION ANYTHING WAS AMISS.

STOESSEL

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